

MARVEL

24

LGY#

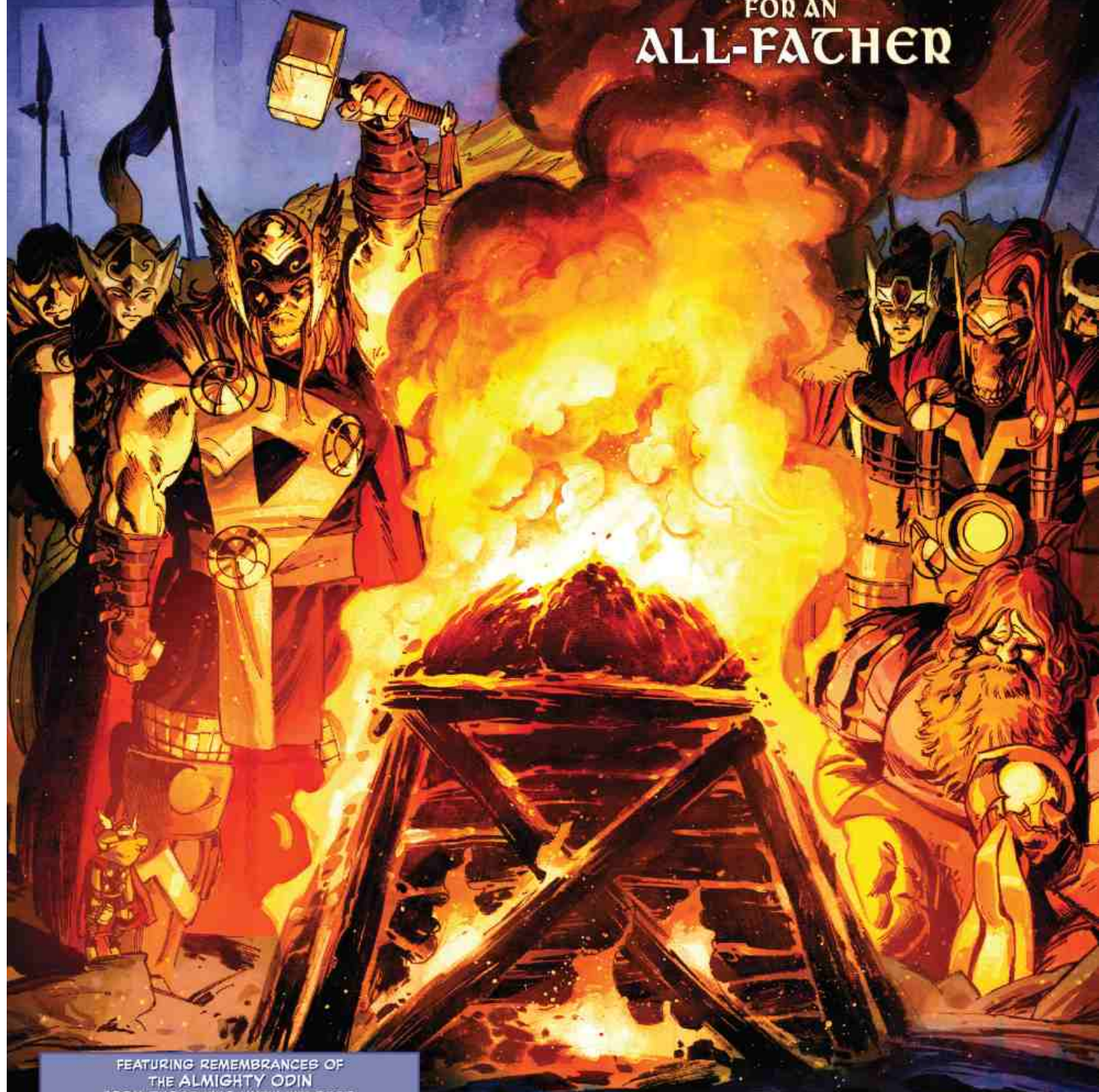
750

60
YEARS

DONNY CATES · NIC KLEIN · MATT WILSON

THOR

**FUNERAL
FOR AN
ALL-FATHER**



FEATURING REMEMBRANCES OF
THE ALMIGHTY ODIN
FROM THOSE WHO KNEW HIM BEST:
JASON AARON & DAS PASTORAS,
AL EWING & LEE GARBETT,
DAN JURGENS, WALTER SIMONSON, and
J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI & OLIVIER COIPEL

2011

A CELEBRATION OF THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY AND 750 ISSUES OF

THOR

BROUGHT TO YOU BY BELOVED CREATIVE TEAMS OF THOR'S PAST AND PRESENT.

THOR IS THE GOD OF THUNDER AND ALL-FATHER OF ASGARD.

HE HAS JUST VANQUISHED THE MURDEROUS GOD OF HAMMERS, WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE THE CORRUPTED PERSONIFICATION OF MJOLNIR ITSELF. THIS VICTORY, HOWEVER, COST HIM NOT ONLY HIS HAMMER, BUT ALSO HIS FATHER, ODIN, WHO SACRIFICED HIS LIFE SO THAT HIS ODIN-FORCE COULD BECOME THE THOR-FORCE AND GIVE HIS SON THE POWER BOOST HE NEEDED IN ORDER TO DEFEAT THE GOD OF HAMMERS.

ANGELA SURPRISED HER BROTHER THOR BY PRESENTING HIM WITH A NEWLY REFORGED MJOLNIR, COURTESY OF THE ANGELS OF HEVEN. BUT THE THUNDER GOD WAS EVEN MORE SURPRISED WHEN THE HAMMER SPOKE TO HIM IN HIS FATHER'S VOICE...

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C.B. CEBULSKI
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THOR CREATED BY STAN LEE, LARRY LIEBER & JACK KIRBY

The king's rain falls
black across Asgard.

Its weight heavy on the
heads of all who have
gathered to send the
Stone King home.

Its roar is chilling.
Its words biting
to the bone.

With every cry drowned and
every tear hidden, the thunder
of an orphaned and wrathful
god dances gently across
the stars...

A warning for all in the Ten
Realms that today...is not
the day to test the mercy
of the mourning.

For Odin...

The one called
One-Eye...

The wandering
Wulf of Hel...

The Raven-God.

The usurper.

The destroyer.

The desecrator.

His name...the only word
for "fear" in the broken
kingdoms left in his wake.

Odin the giant
killer.

Odin the dragon
slayer.

Odin, the
All-Father.

Odin...

my
FATHER...

"...IS GONE."

THE SECOND SON OF ASGARD

DONNY CATES NIC KLEIN MATT WILSON VC'S JOE SABINO
WRITER ARTIST COLOR ARTIST LETTERER

HE WAS...

...A TROUBLED MAN.

A VICIOUS GOD.

A...GREAT AND UNYIELDING KING.

A COMPLICATED HUSBAND. AND A...

...A...A GREAT SHADOW...THAT FALLS EVER STILL...

...ON MY BROTHER AND I...

HEH.

THE OLD BASTARD IS A GHOST NOW. AND I'M *STILL* TERRIFIED OF HIM.

THE TRUTH IS...

...MY FATHER PUSHED ME TO THE BRINK OF MADNESS MORE TIMES THAN I COULD COUNT.

HE WAS A MAN OF GREAT AND TERRIBLE CONTRADICTIONS.



HERE
WAS THE GREAT
CONQUERING ODIN.
A KING WITH A
CROWN OF BLOOD.
FEARED BY ALL,
WITH MERCY FOR
NONE.

AND
YET, HERE
IS ODIN...



...CARRYING
AND RAISING HIS
GREATEST ENEMIES'
ABANDONED CHILD
AS IF IT WERE
HIS OWN...

GRANTING
POWER TO THOSE
IN NEED...THOSE WHO
HE WOULD JUDGE AS
EQUALS THOUGH
THEIR BLOOD RAN
NOT OF
ASGARD...

...JUDGING
THEM...BY THE
WORTHINESS ONLY
HE SEEMED TO
SEE IN THEIR
HEARTS.



A TRAIT
HE SEEMED
SO...

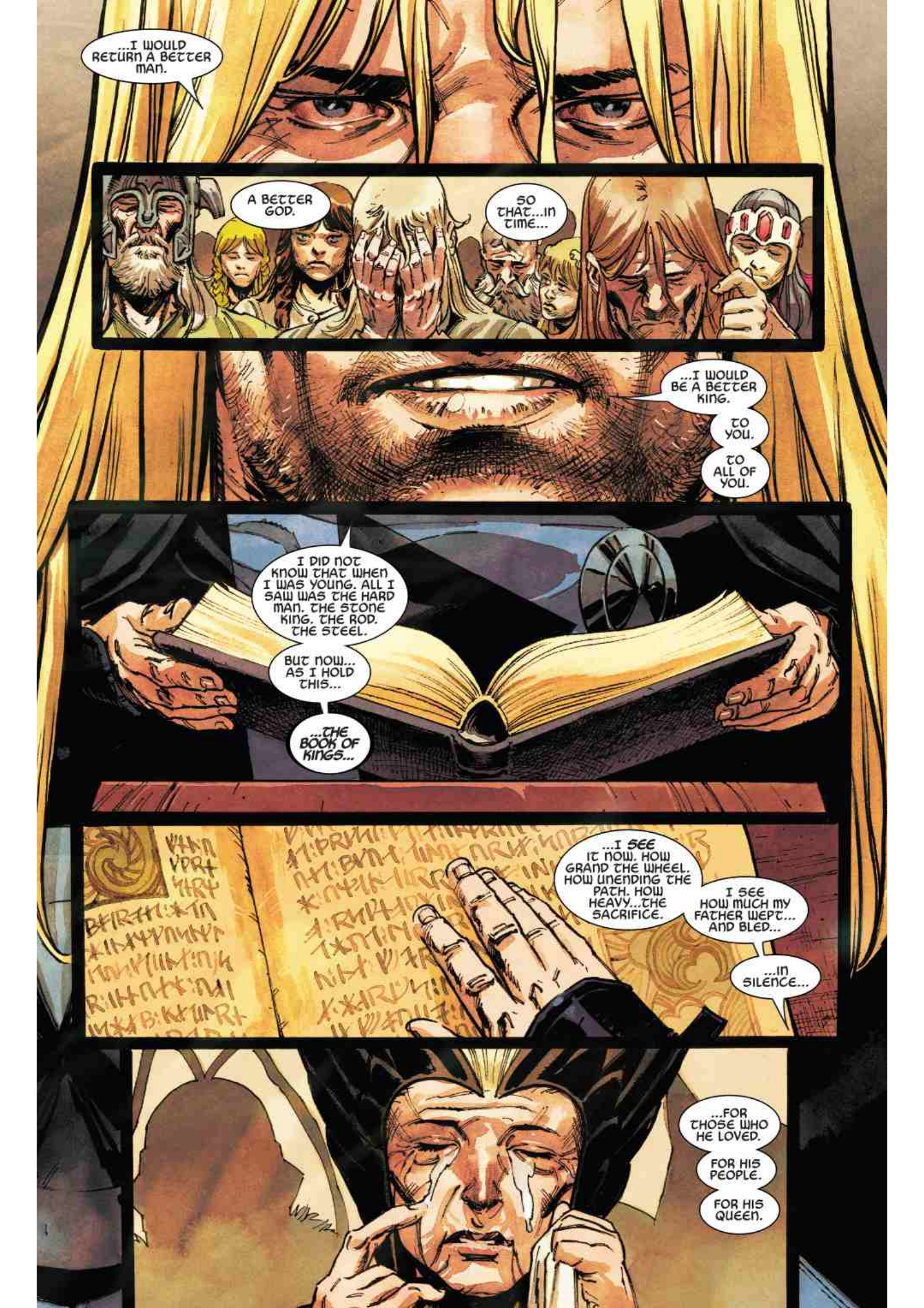
...SO VERY
SELDOMLY TO
FIND IN ME.



I DO NOT
SAY HERE TODAY
ANYTHING YOU ALL HAVE
NOT HEARD BEFORE. HEL,
MY FATHER HAS CAST ME
OUT OF HIS KINGDOMS
MORE TIMES THAN
I CAN COUNT.

AND EVERY
DAMN TIME, I
WOULD RAGE.
SCREAM AND CURSE
HIS NAME AT A
SILENT SKY...

AND
EACH AND
EVERY DAMNED
TIME...



...I WOULD
RETURN A BETTER
MAN.

A BETTER
GOD.

SO
THAT...IN
TIME...

...I WOULD
BE A BETTER
KING.

TO
YOU.

TO
ALL OF
YOU.

I DID NOT
KNOW THAT WHEN
I WAS YOUNG, ALL I
SAW WAS THE HARD
MAN. THE STONE
KING. THE ROD.
THE STEEL.

BUT NOW...
AS I HOLD
THIS...

...THE
BOOK OF
KINGS...

...I SEE
IT NOW. HOW
GRAND THE WHEEL.
HOW UNENDING THE
PATH. HOW
HEAVY...THE
SACRIFICE.

I SEE
HOW MUCH MY
FATHER WEPT...
AND BLED...

...IN
SILENCE...

...FOR
THOSE WHO
HE LOVED.

FOR HIS
PEOPLE.

FOR HIS
QUEEN.



FOR HIS
SONS.



FOR
ASGARD!

ALWAYS!

ALWAYS AND
FOREVER!

FOR
ASGARD.



FOR YOU SEE,
ONLY THE KING OF
ASGARD MAY READ
THE HIDDEN PAGES OF
THE BOOK OF KINGS.
THAT ENCHANTMENT
HAS BEEN THE LAW
AND THE LETTER
SINCE THE DAYS
OF TITANS.

SINCE THE
DAYS OF BURI,
OUR FIRST KING.
TO BOR, MY
GRANDFATHER.

TO MY
FATHER...ODIN.
SECOND SON
OF ASGARD.

AND
NOW...

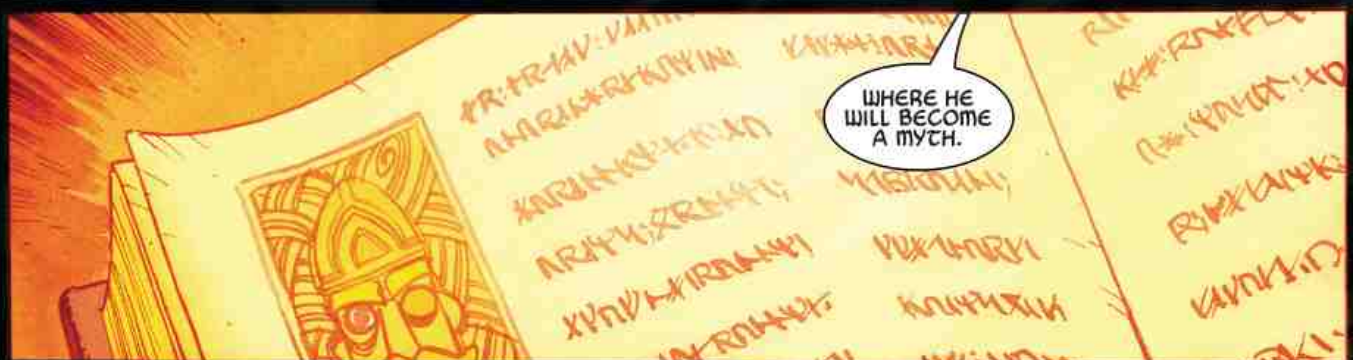
...TO
ME.



BUT ON
THIS DAY--THIS...
IMPOSSIBLE DAY--
I SEE IT ONLY FITTING
THAT WE ALL SHARE
THESE TALES, AS MY
FATHER IS SENT TO
HIS SEAT IN VALHALLA
TO SEARCH ETERNITY
FOR AN EMPTY
CUP.

WHERE HE
WILL FINALLY
BECOME THE
THING THAT HE
ALWAYS MADE
REAL...

...FOR
SO MANY
OF US...



WHERE HE
WILL BECOME
A MYTH.

FAR BEYOND THE FIELDS WE KNOW...

A LEGEND.

FAR BEYOND
THE FIELDS
WE KNOW...

...IN THE
BURNING
GALAXY OF THE
KORBINITES...

"WHAT THE
HELL'S THE
TUOG DOING
HERE? THIS
ISN'T ITS
NATURAL
HABITAT."

"YEAH. AND THE
TEELA FOREST'S
RADIATION'S
INTERFERING
WITH OUR
TRACKING
SIGNALS."

"YOU THINK IT'S
DELIBERATE?"

"NEGATIVE. IT'S
NOT THAT SMART--

OH GODS!
!!!

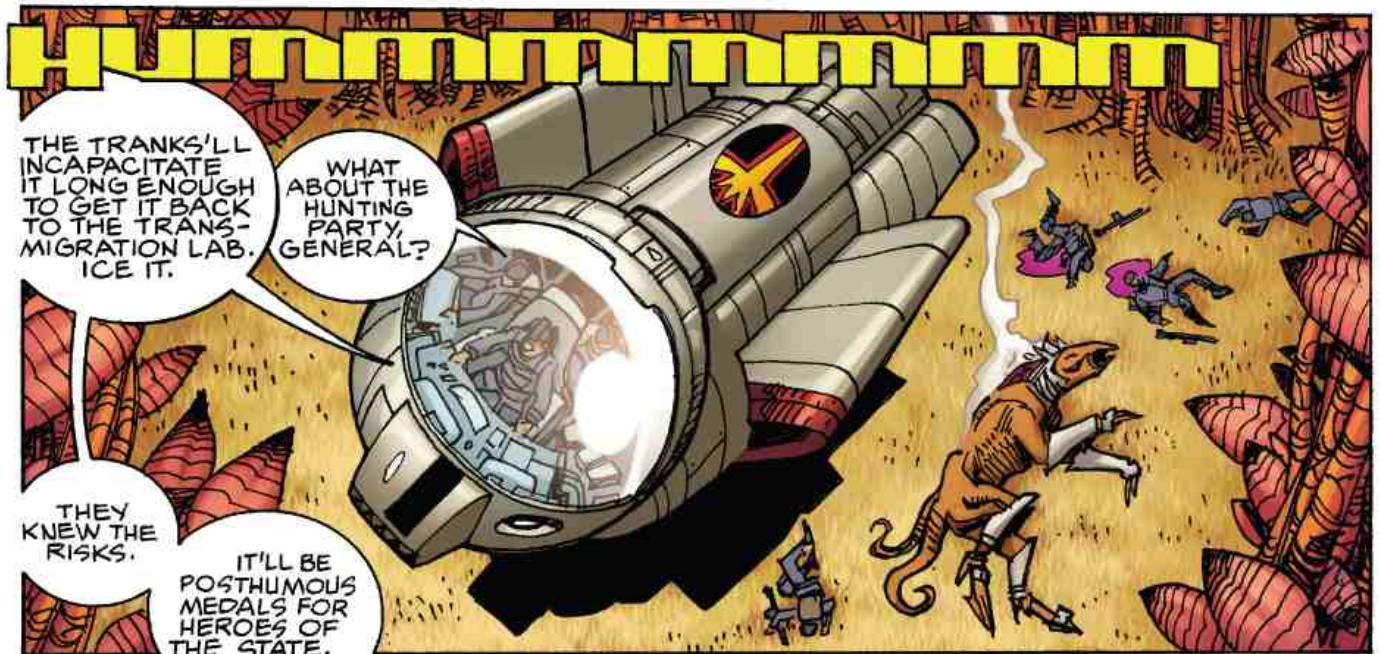
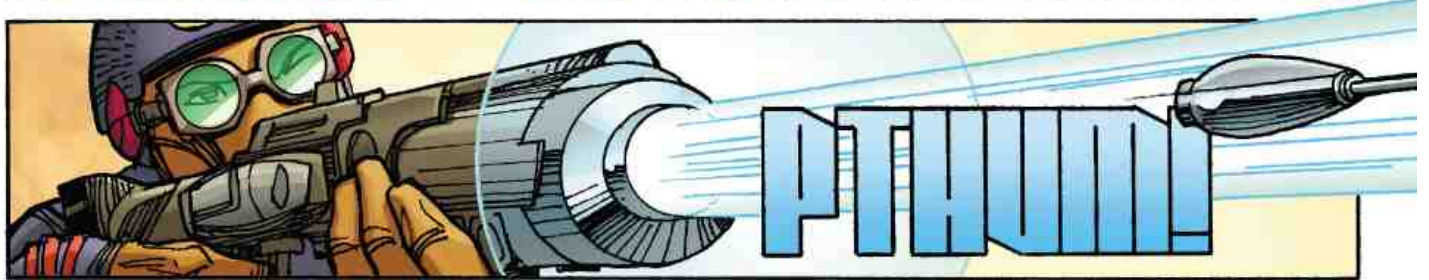
BWEEEEP!

PROLOGUE

AEEEE!

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THE TRANKS'LL
INCAPACITATE
IT LONG ENOUGH
TO GET IT BACK
TO THE TRANS-
MIGRATION LAB.
ICE IT.

WHAT
ABOUT THE
HUNTING
PARTY,
GENERAL?

THEY
KNEW THE
RISKS.

IT'LL BE
POSTHUMOUS
MEDALS FOR
HEROES OF
THE STATE.

VITALS ARE CLIMBING! GET IT INTO THE ABLATION MANUFACTORY! HURRY!



"BRETHREN, THE GALAXY CORE EXPLOSION IS IMMINENT. I HAVE CALLED THIS EMERGENCY CONVOCATION BECAUSE MATTERS ARE COMING TO A HEAD."



"WHEN THE GREAT KORBINITE GAMES CONCLUDED, TEN CHAMPIONS WERE CHOSEN."



"THEY WERE SUBJECTED TO A FINAL PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILING IN THE COALESCENCE CHAMBER."



"SEVEN DIED."



"AT THE COST OF THEIR OWN LIVES, FOUR OF OUR GREATEST HUNTSMEN CAPTURED A TUOG."

"WHEN THE TUOG WAS BROUGHT INTO THE TRANS-MIGRATION LAB, THE REMAINING THREE CHAMPIONS WERE VIVISECTED ALONG WITH THE TUOG."



"TWO DIED, AND THE FINAL CHAMPION PROVED TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH THE PREDATOR."



"THE BETA PROJECT IS AIMED AT CREATING AN INTELLIGENT AND FEROCIOUS GUARDIAN FOR OUR PEOPLE'S EXODUS FROM THE BURNING GALAXY."

"IT IS A MILITARY PROJECT, AND, AS SUCH, NOT SUBJECT TO PRIESTLY OVERSIGHT."



"THE MILITARY DEEMED THE ORIGINAL ALPHA PROJECT--A COMBINATION OF ROBOTICS AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE--TOO UNCREATIVE FOR THE TASK OF GUARDING OUR RACE."

"FORTUNATELY, OUR TECHNO-PRIESTS WERE ABLE TO SUBVERT THE ALPHA'S PROGRAMMING. THE CREATURE IS NOW OURS."

"I HAVE DISPATCHED IT TO KILL THE BETA PROJECT..."

"...BEFORE THE HYBRID AWAKENS."

URRK!

THE GREAT ARMADA WILL LAUNCH IN SIX HOURS...

...WITH OUR SLAVE AS ITS GUARDIAN.

"ONCE THE ALPHA HAS DISPATCHED THE BETA PROJECT USING THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE..."

"...THE MILITARY WILL BE LEFT WITH NO CHOICE BUT TO ACTIVATE THE ALPHA ENTITY..."

"...NOT KNOWING WE ALREADY CONTROL IT COMPLETELY."

"ONCE WE HAVE ARRIVED AT OUR NEW WORLD, WE SHALL ELIMINATE--"

"YOUR EMINENCE, THE TELEMETRY FEED FROM THE ALPHA HAS BEEN INTERRUPTED."



"VATK, GO! CONFIRM
ALPHA'S KILL AND
REPORT BACK."

"YOUR
EMINENCE."

"LET US HOPE
OUR SECRET..."

SLAMM!

...HAS
NOT BEEN
UNCOVERED.

FIREWALL
BREACHED.

CONNECTION
ESTABLISHED.

DATA
DOWNLOAD
COMPLETE.



YES,
LORD
AUKTHRK.
THEY
DO.

WHA--?



URK!

KRAKK!

SLAMM!



MY DOWNLOAD
OF ALPHA'S DATA
WAS QUITE
ENLIGHTENING.

THE SACRIFICE
TO THE GODS FOR
SAFE PASSAGE
HAS BEEN
ACCOMPLISHED.

I'M SURE
LORD AUKTHRK
WOULD BE
PLEASED.

I TRUST NO
FURTHER
SACRIFICES
WILL BE
NEEDED.

DO I
MAKE
MYSELF
CLEAR?



NOW
TO YOUR
STASIS
COFFINS!
GO!



GREETINGS, SKUTTLEBUTT.

ARE YOU MY NEW COMMANDER?

I AM YOUR NEW PARTNER, GREAT BEAST.

MY SENSORS CONFIRM THAT YOU ARE A BETA LEVEL HYBRID. I UNDERSTOOD THAT MY NEW COMMANDER WAS AN ALPHA LEVEL A.I.

YOU WERE MISINFORMED.

GOOD. I WOULD NOT LIKE TO TAKE ORDERS OF ANOTHER A.I.

THAT ALONE RENDERED HIM UNFIT FOR COMMAND.

DOWNLOAD MY CORE AND TWIN US. WE MUST BECOME AS ONE FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD.

FZZZZZZZZZZPTT!

ALPHA HAD ALREADY BEEN SUBORBNED BY THE PRIESTS.

YOU KILLED THE HIGH PRIEST?

A SACRIFICE WAS NEEDED, HE SAID.

I DOUBT IF LORD AUKTHK MEANT HIMSELF. AUDACIOUS.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES. WE SHALL GET ON, YOU AND I, SKUTTLEBUTT.

TIME IS SHORT.

ALL SHIPS SHOW GREEN.

REMANDING UNIFIED FLEET CONTROL TO ONBOARD MAINFRAME.

SYNCHRONIZING LAUNCH WINDOWS.

COMMENCING COUNTDOWN.

ACTIVATING STASIS CHAMBER.

AWAKEN ME IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY.

10 9 8 7 6

5

4

3

2

1

IGNITION

AND FROM
THE BURNING
GALAXY...

...TEN THOUSAND
STARSHIPS EXPLODE
INTO SPACE...

...CARRYING THE HOPES,
DREAMS, AND FEARS OF
THE KORBINITE RACE INTO
THE FUTURE AS THE BURNING
GALAXY BEGINS TO
EXPLODE BEHIND THEM.

SLEEP WELL...
COMMANDER.

FIN

THE SEDUCTION

DAN JURGENS WRITER & PENCILER KLAUS JANSON INKER
MATT WILSON COLORIST VC's JOE SABINO LETTERER

INTERNAL NOTATION:
WE ARE IN A DISTANT,
BARREN SECTION
OF THE UNIVERSE.

A BATTLE OF GODS
LEFT ME UNABLE TO
SPEAK...MY POWER
SUPPLY NEARLY
EXHAUSTED.

MY ABILITY TO
OBSERVE AND
REC-TZZT--IS
FAD--KZZTZ.

...

RECORDER.

THANOS
AND MANGOG ARE
VANQUISHED.

TARENE AND
FIRELORD HATH
DEPARTED.

ALL
THAT REMAINS
IS TO REPAIR
THEE...

...GIVING
THEE LIFE ONCE
MORE.



IN THE PAST, I HAD NOT THE POWER TO DO SO.

NOW, THANKS TO ALL-KNOWING ODIN, 'TIS NO LONGER THE CASE.

'T WAS HE WHO ENGAGED THE BLACKSMITH JAFAR FELIN TO FASHION THESE WEAPONS OF WAR...

...WHICH ENABLED ME TO DEFEAT THANOS.*

*AS SEEN IN THOR (1998) #25, AVAILABLE ON MARVEL UNLIMITED. --WIL



YET THE WEAPONS BY THEMSELVES WOULD NOT HAVE SUFFICED.

VERILY, DID THEY NEED INFUSION OF THE ALL-MIGHTY ODIN-FORCE TO ENSURE VICTORY.

ONCE TOUCHED BY THE GAUNTLET OF TOMORROWS, THAT POWER SHOULD REPAIR THEE AND--

I SAY THEE--

--NAY!!



FATHER?!

I SPEAK TO THEE FROM ASGARD, FOR THINE ITEMS MUST BE UTILIZED BUT ONCE!

THOU ART ORDERED TO CAST THEM ASIDE--NE'ER TO BE WORN AGAIN.

I BID THEE TO RECONSIDER, FOR THE ADVANTAGE IS CLEAR!

SO LONG AS I USE THEM IN SERVICE OF ASGARD AND ALL THAT IS RIGHT AND JUST... WHY SURRENDER THEM?



TRUE, THE BELT OF POWER, SHIELD OF LIFE AND GAUNTLET OF TOMORROWS MAKE THEE HIGH UNTO INVINCIBLE.

YET THEY ARE SEDUCTIVE IN NATURE, DRAINING THE NOBLE AND RIGHTEOUS CHARACTER OF THE BEARER...

...UNTIL HE IS LEFT WITHOUT EMPATHY OR MORAL HEADING.

SO SAYETH HE WHO IS BEYOND QUESTION AND DOUBT!

SO SAYETH ODIN!



--THE
WRATH OF
MANGOG!

MANGOG?!

AYE!

HE WHO
IS MORE THAN A
SINGLE LIVING
BEING...

...FOR MANGOG
CARRIES THE POWER
AND DETERMINATION
OF AN ENTIRE
RACE!

HOW, WHEN
I FELLED THEE
MERE MOMENTS
AGO?

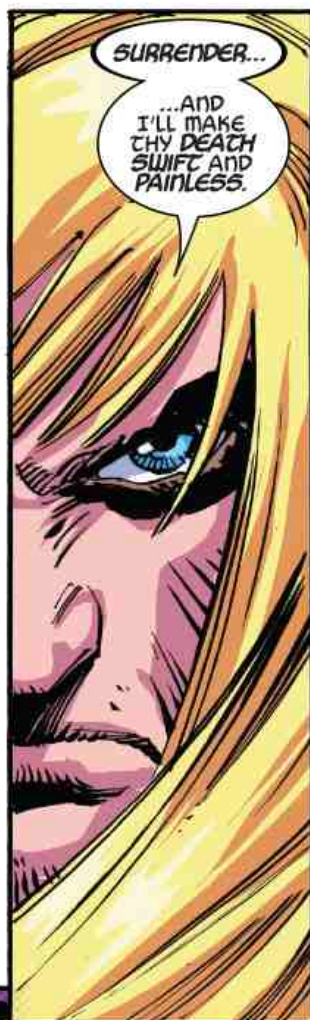
SO LONG AS I CARRY THE
ALL-CONSUMING HATE
AND FURY OF A
BILLION, BILLION
BEINGS...

...I SHALT
NEVER FALL
TO THEE!

INSIPID
FOOL.

AS MIGHTY
MJOLNIR'S BITING
STING LAID THEE
LOW BEFORE...













I AM SORRY, RECORDER,
WITHOUT THE GAUNTLET
OF TOMORROWS...

...I
FEAR THOU
ART DESTINED
TO REMAIN...
WRECKAGE.

I SAY
THEE MAY
my son.



THE RECORDER
RETAINS A SPARK
OF LIFE...



...WHICH
I CAN
REIGNITE.



OBSERVATION:
BY THE POWER
AND GRACE OF
ALMIGHTY ODIN...



...THIS UNIT IS FULLY
FUNCTIONAL AGAIN.

AS
IT SHOULD
BE.

JUST AS
BALDER AND
THE WEAPONS
OF WAR SHALL BE
TRANSPORTED
BACK TO
ASGARD.

I REALIZE
THOU MIGHT DO
THE SAME FOR ME,
BUT I REQUEST
THEE NOT DO
SO, FATHER.

I WOULDST
RATHER TAKE
THE TIME TO
TRAVEL BY MY
OWN POWER...



...THAT I
MIGHT CONSIDER
TODAY'S EVENTS
AND REALIZE THAT
WHEN IT COMES
TO THE WORD
OF ODIN...

...one must
listen.

STATEMENT:
TRUER WORDS...

...HAVE RARELY,
IF EVER, BEEN
SPOKEN.

THE END.



LET ME GO...
THIS KIND OF BEHAVIOR
IS **ABSOLUTELY**
INAPPROPRIATE UNDER
THE RULES AND
REGULATIONS OF THE
AMERICAN BAR
ASSOCIATION!

I HAVEN'T
THE FIRST
NOTION WHAT THIS
ASSOCIATION IS, BUT
IF THERE'S A **BAR**
INVOLVED, THEY'RE
MY KIND OF
MORTALS.

LOOK--

no--



--YOU
LOOK.

OH...



...MY.

SIT, PLEASE.
WOULD YOU LIKE
ANYTHING TO
DRINK?

BENEDICTIONS

J. MICHAEL STRACZYNSKI OLIVIER COIPEL
WRITER ARTIST

ALEJANDRO SÁNCHEZ VC's JOE SABINO
COLOR ARTIST LETTERER



I... NO,
THANK YOU, NOT
ON THE JOB. BUT
I MUST CONFESS,
MR. THOR--

JUST
THOR.

--I DIDN'T
EXPECT... I MEAN,
MY SERVICES WERE
RETAINED BY
A MISTER
D. BLAKE.



SIX OF ONE,
HALF DOZEN OF
THE OTHER.

BUT THE
JOB--

--STILL
REMAINS TO
BE DONE.



I WISH TO MAKE
A **WILL**. ONE THAT
WILL BE ACCEPTED BY MY
PEOPLE AND YOURS. THIS
IS WHY YOU ARE HERE.



BUT...I THOUGHT YOU AND YOUR PEOPLE WERE IMMORTAL.

I AM. WE ARE. UNTIL WE ARE NOT. MY FATHER HAS DIED SEVERAL TIMES. AS HAS LOKI. EVEN I HAVE KNOWN DEATH'S BRIEF TOUCH. BUT SOONER OR LATER, THE TOUCH LINGERS, THE DARKNESS DOES NOT PART, AND WE ARE NO MORE.



EACH TIME MY FATHER ODIN DIED, HIS PARTING LED TO CHAOS, JEALOUSY AND STRUGGLES OVER POWER. I DO NOT WISH TO SEE THE SAME HAPPEN WHEN I AM CALLED FROM THIS LIFE.



WELL, YOU COULD ALWAYS FORM A THOR CORPORATION, SOMETHING THAT WOULD GO ON CONTROLLING YOUR ASSETS AFTER YOUR PASSING, AND--

--AND--



--NEVER MIND... I DON'T KNOW WHAT I WAS THINKING. PLEASE, CONTINUE.

I HAVE MADE A LIST OF PERSONAL BEQUESTS.



YOU WILL FIND THEM HERE. ALONG WITH INSTRUCTIONS STATING THAT MY BROTHER, BALDER, SHOULD TAKE POWER AFTER I AM GONE.

I WILL HAVE NO SQUABBLES IN MY ABSENCE. YOU WILL PUT THESE INTO THE CORRECT LEGAL LANGUAGE--

OF COURSE.

--BECAUSE IF THERE IS ANY AMBIGUITY, WHATEVER PRETENDER TO THE THRONE ARISES WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY SEEK TO TORTURE YOU INTO ADMITTING ERROR.

AH. I SEE. ANYTHING ELSE? THIS SEEMS FAIRLY STRAIGHTFORWARD.



YES. A LAST BEQUEST, AND FINAL INSTRUCTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED. I KNOW HOW TO PHRASE THE LATTER, I DO NOT KNOW HOW TO SAY THE FORMER. IN THIS, YOU WILL HELP ME.

OF COURSE. TO WHOM WOULD THIS--

TO THE PEOPLE OF MIDGARD... OF EARTH.

LISTEN TO MY WORDS, AND DO WITH THEM WHAT YOU CAN.



"I HAVE WALKED AMONG
YOUR PEOPLE FOR
CENTURIES BEYOND
REMEMBERING...HAVE SEEN
YOUR BEAUTY IN WAYS YOU
SO OFTEN FAIL TO SEE IN
YOURSELVES. YOU HAVE
SUCH POTENTIAL FOR JOY--



"--AND FOR TERROR...
MINDLESS MURDER TO
BUILD EMPIRES ON SAND
ONLY TO SEE THEM
COLLAPSE AND BE
FORGOTTEN...BLOOD
AND TEARS SPENT ON
THE CRUEL GROUND.



"DESPITE THESE TERRORS, YOU
HAVE STEPPED FORWARD TO ACHIEVE
GREAT THINGS. WITH EVERY STEP
TAKEN, YOU CHANGE AND GROW--

"--AND YET SO
LITTLE UNDERSTAND
YOUR POWER."

YOU REVERE THE GODS BECAUSE THEY--WE--ARE IMMORTAL.
BUT YOU FAIL TO GRASP THAT TO BE IMMORTAL IS TO BE
RESISTANT TO CHANGE. WE HAVE AN ETERNITY IN WHICH
TO THINK ABOUT WHAT WE MIGHT DO OR CHANGE...
AND THUS WE NEVER DO THEM.

WE WHO
LIVE FOREVER ARE
LIKE FROZEN RIVERS
SURROUNDED BY
COLD STONES.

WE ARE FIXED
POINTS, IMMUTABLE
AND UNCHANGING. WHAT I
WAS, I AM FOREVER...WHAT
ODIN AND LOKI WERE,
THEY WERE AND ARE
FOREVER.

BUT BECAUSE THE LIVES OF
HUMANS ARE BRIEF, YOU
MUST **GROW** NOW, MUST
LEARN NOW, MUST **CHANGE**
NOW, MUST **DO** AND **THINK**
AND **BECOME** NOW.

IT IS NOT
YOU WHO SHOULD
BE WORSHIPPING US...
IT IS WE WHO SHOULD
BE WORSHIPPING YOU.
AND AT MY END, I
WOULD HAVE YOU
KNOW THESE
THINGS.

WHEN A
TREE LOOKS AT
ANOTHER TREE, IT
SEES SOMETHING
AS UNCHANGING
AS ITSELF.

BUT FROM A
TREE'S PERSPECTIVE,
HUMANITY IS A BLUR...A
BEAUTIFUL, MAGNIFICENT,
IMPOSSIBLE BLUR.



I SEE, I...YES...
I'VE GOT ALL THAT.
AND YOUR FINAL
INSTRUCTIONS? I
ASSUME THIS HAS
SOMETHING TO
DO WITH--



MY BODY, YES. OR WHAT MAY
REMAIN OF IT AT THAT TIME.
I WOULD HAVE A WARRIOR'S
FUNERAL--

IN A
BOAT, SET
AFIRE?

NOT
EXACTLY.



"IT IS MY WISH TO BE SENT INTO
THE STORMS OF SATURN, WHICH
HAVE BEEN ROILING THAT WORLD
FOR AGES IMMEMORIAL."

"WHY
SATURN?"



"BECAUSE WITHIN THOSE STORMS ARE
BOLTS OF LIGHTNING TEN THOUSAND
TIMES STRONGER THAN ANY THE EARTH
HAS EVER KNOWN...AND THUNDER LOUD
ENOUGH TO SHATTER WHOLE WORLDS."



ARE YOU GOING THERE IN THE
HOPE THAT IT WILL RESTORE
YOU TO LIFE?

THAT WOULD
BE THE OBVIOUS
CONCLUSION,
BUT NO.



I AM
DRAWN TO THE
SOUND OF THUNDER
BECAUSE IT IS THE ONLY SONG
I KNOW. WE WILL SING THERE, IN
THE HEART OF THE STORM. TELL
ONE ANOTHER UNLIKELY STORIES,
AND KEEP COMPANY THROUGH
THE AGES, UNTIL THE END
OF ALL THINGS.

YOU
MAY GO
NOW.



VOLSTAGG
WILL SEE TO YOUR
PAYMENT.



I...YES,
I'LL...GET
GOING ON
THIS AT ONCE,
AND--



I CAN WRITE DOWN WHAT
YOU SAID ABOUT WHAT
WE CAN BE AT OUR BEST,
BUT I DON'T KNOW IF I
CAN MAKE THE WORLD
UNDERSTAND HOW
YOU SAID
IT, OR--

--WHAT
IF THEY DON'T
BELIEVE? WHAT IF
THEY STILL DON'T
UNDERSTAND?



THEY
WILL.

EVENTUALLY.

GIVEN
WHAT IS
COMING.



BUT...
WHAT'S--

SLAM



YOU'LL
SEE.

END.

MEANWHILE----
FOURTEEN BILLION YEARS AGO!!
DURING THE "SIXTH INFINITY"!!

SCIENCEER
SUPREME TAAIA!!

"ON-SCREEN"--
I'M GETTING AN
"INCURSION
SIGNAL"!!

SOMETHING'S
LOCKED INTO OUR
"TELE-RECEPTORS"--
COMING THROUGH ON
CODE "T-X-3-N"!!

TX3N

THAT'S
NOT ONE OF
OUR "ENTRY
CODES"--!!

AND YET--
BEHOLD!!

A "MACRO-
GATE"--CONNECTING
TO "NEUTRA-
SPACE"!!

WHATEVER
THAT IS--IT'S
FROM "OUTSIDE"
THE SPACE-TIME
WE KNOW!!

TX3N

"T-X-3-N"--
SPELLS "NEXT"...?!

WHAT COMES
NEXT?!

NEXT

HEY, MY
NAME'S LOKI.
I'M THE GOD
OF STORIES.

NICE
MULTIVERSE
YOU HAVE
HERE.

MIND
IF I COME
IN?

WHAT COMES NEXT

AL EWING
WRITER
ANTONIO FABELA
COLOR ARTIST

LEE GARBETT
ARTIST
VC's JOE SABINO
LETTERER





ASGARD.
NOW.



MY CHILD,
WHO IS BOTH
SON AND
DAUGHTER.

I KNOW
YOU. I KNOW
EVERYTHING
YOU ARE.

AND I
LOVE YOU
STILL.



ODIN.









NAH.

I'M SORRY.



YOU'D THINK I'D KNOW BETTER, WOULDN'T YOU? OF ALL PEOPLE.

IT'S THE FEAR TALKING. I'M SCARED OF YOU.

SCARED FOR YOU.



I'M SCARED YOU'LL GO BACKWARDS. THAT MY FUTURE'S GOING TO BE MY PAST. AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN. NO MATTER WHAT...

...BUT THAT'S NOT LOKI, IS IT? WE MADE SURE OF THAT. IN THE END...WE WON.

I'M THE PAST, NOW, YOU'RE WHAT COMES NEXT-- AND YOU CAN TAKE THE STORY ANYWHERE.



I'M JUST GLAD I GOT TO TELL IT FOR A WHILE.



OH, ALL RIGHT. ONE LAST ADVENTURE.

WISH ME LUCK, LOKI.

"LOKI?!"



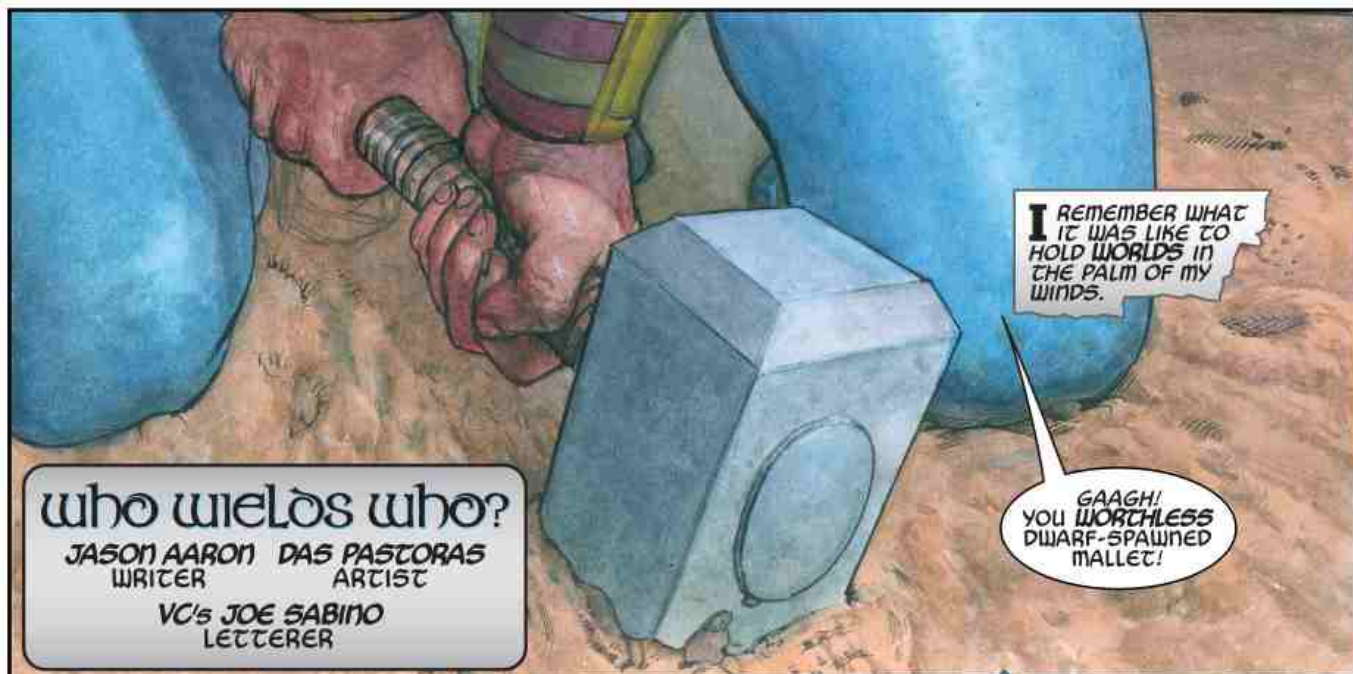
N E X T :

...SOME
JOURNEY INTO
MYSTERY.

HONEST.



TO BE CONTINUED IN
DEFENDERS: BEYOND #1!!



who wields who?

JASON AARON DAS PASTORAS
WRITER ARTIST

VC's JOE SABINO
LETTERER



MIDGARD.
ONE MILLION YEARS AGO.



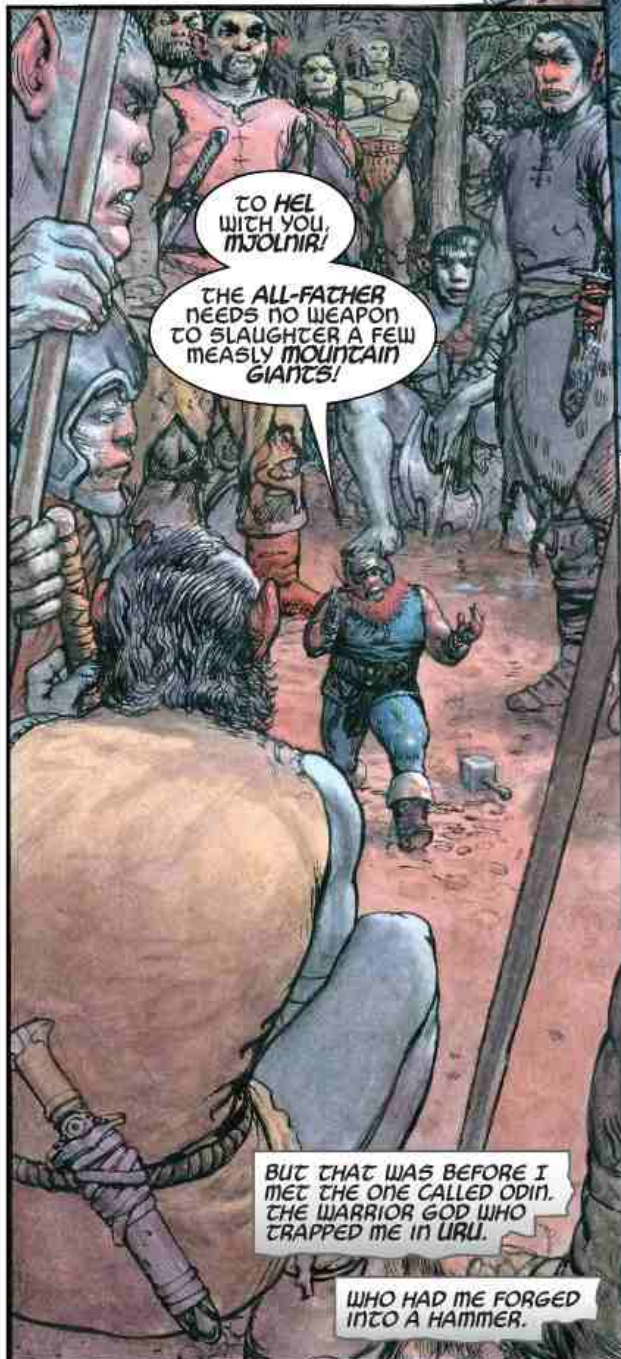
NOW IS WHEN
YOU CHOOSE TO
DEFY ME?! HERE, IN
FRONT OF THESE
IMBECILES?!

ODIN WILL
NOT BE MADE A
FOOL OF BY HIS
OWN BOR-DAMNED
HAMMER!

THEY CALLED
ME THE GOD
TEMPEST.

THE MOTHER
OF STORMS.

THE FIRST WIND TO
STIR THE DUSTS
OF CREATION.



TO HEL
WITH YOU,
MJOLNIR!

THE ALL-FATHER
NEEDS NO WEAPON
TO SLAUGHTER A FEW
MEASLY MOUNTAIN
GIANTS!

BUT THAT WAS BEFORE I
MET THE ONE CALLED ODIN.
THE WARRIOR GOD WHO
TRAPPED ME IN URU.

WHO HAD ME FORGED
INTO A HAMMER.



THE GOD WHO
TAMED THE
WILD STORM.

GRRRRRRGGH!!!

OR SO HE WOULD
LIKE TO THINK.



ODIN SADDLES ME WITH
ENCHANTMENTS, AS
IF THE GOD STORM IS
A BUCKING STALLION
THAT CAN BE BROKEN.

TOGETHER, WE FIGHT TO
PROTECT THE PREHISTORIC
PEOPLES OF MIDGARD.

AND THERE ARE MOMENTS, WHEN
WE ARE SOARING BETWEEN THE
REALMS ON THE POWER OF MY
WINDS, THAT THE WALLS OF
TIME ITSELF ARE RENT THIN...

...AND DISTANT ECHOES OF
THUNDER CAN BE HEARD,
FROM DAYS YET TO COME.

FROM WIELDERS
YET TO RISE.

LEGENDS YET
TO BE BORN.

FROM GODS WHO WILL
SOMEDAY WAGE BATTLE
BEYOND COMPARE
AGAINST THE FIERCEST
OF COSMIC FOES.

AND WHO WILL
STRUGGLE AND
STRIVE ABOVE
ALL ELSE...

...TO BE
WORTHY.



WORTHY
OF ME.

KING OF
THE MOUNTAIN
GIANTS.

AS YOU
CAN SEE...YOUR
INVASION...IS A
BLOOD-DRENCHED
FAILURE.

DO YOU
YIELD?



HA! A
JOTUNN DOES
NOT YIELD TO
A FLEA!

I HOPED...
YOU MIGHT SAY
THAT. THEN
LET US--



UUGHK!

AS A STORM, I WATCHED OVER THE
GODS FROM THEIR INFANCY. I ROARED
WITH THE WINDS OF JUDGMENT.



I KEPT THE LORDS OF
HEAVEN ACCOUNTABLE,
AS ONLY I COULD.

YOU!

NOW YOU
RISE?! TO
CLAIM MY
KILL!!!

NOW THEY THINK ME A
SIMPLE WEAPON TO BE
WIELDED...BUT NO
ENCHANTMENT HAS
EVER TAMED MY
TEMPEST.

GRRRRGGGGH!!!

SOONER OR LATER...THE
GREATEST OF THE GODS WILL
FALL TO THEIR KNEES BEFORE ME.

FOR I AM NOT THEIR
WEAPON. I AM NOT
THE HAMMER OF
THE GODS.

JUST...
TAKE US HOME,
MJOLNIR.

YOU...YOU
WORTHLESS...

YOU...

I AM THE HAMMER
THAT HUMBLER
THEM.

I AM THE STORM
THAT WIELDS
THEM.

END.





The arrow that Volstagg carries weighs heavy in his hands. Though, in fact, it weighs nothing at all.

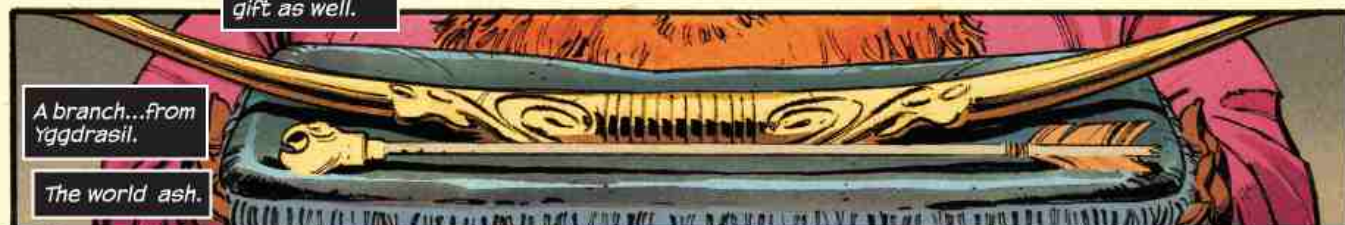
The shaft of the arrow was fashioned from Gungnir. The Odin-Spear.

"The spear of heaven" it has been called. Though it carries many...darker names in certain realms.



Though perhaps the saying was merely prophecy, as now the arrow that was the Odin-Spear will be guided on its journey by flights made of angel's wings.

The bow was a gift as well.



A branch...from Yggdrasil.

The world ash.



The Avenger Hawkeye carved the longbow himself. Making sure its flight would be strong and true.

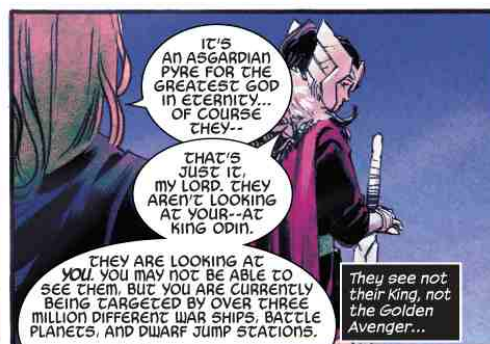
The bow's string was woven from the abyss-black hair of Hela, Goddess of Death. A gift, or perhaps a threat, from Niffleheim.



Whatever the message is, Thor cares not.

The arrow's head, made in the eternal flame of Muspelheim and affixed to the spear with sap from the World Tree...

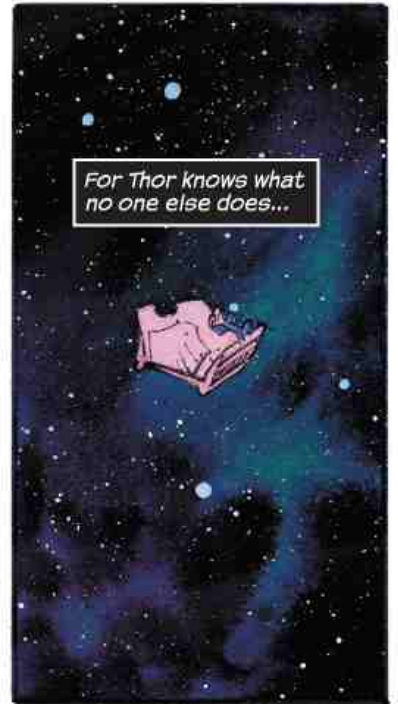
...burns as deep as Hel itself in his hands.



This is the wrath
of a god.



For Thor knows what
no one else does...



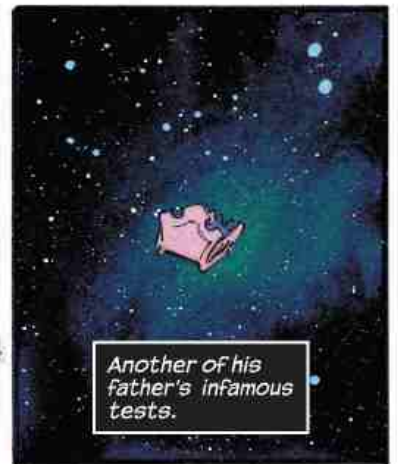
That Odin is alive. His soul
trapped inside of Mjolnir...
and though Thor knows
not how...

...he is certain
he knows...why.

That this...all of
this...is some
cruel joke.



Another of his
father's infamous
tests.



Some game. Some
riddle. Some
challenge of
wisdom or--

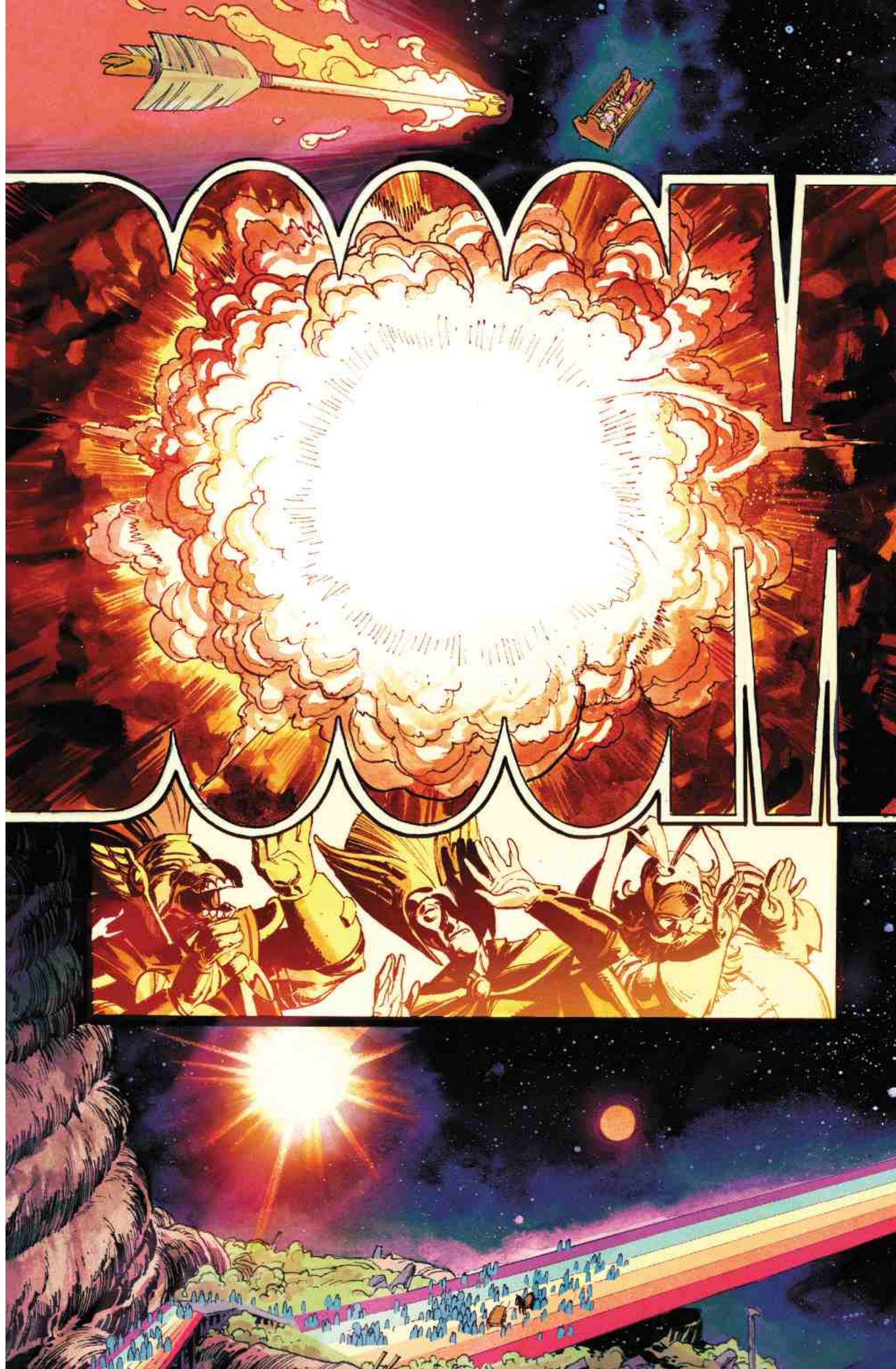
no...



I CAN'T
DO THIS.









HEH HEH... "THE SECOND SON OF ASGARD."



WELL DONE INDEED, BROTHER.



AYE...



FOR ODIN!



FOR ASGARD!!!



...FOREVER.



HAVING YOUR LITTLE BROTHER DO THE DEED? GODS, BOY, HOW ARE YOU EXPECTING TO RUN ASGARD IF YOU CAN'T EVEN--

no.

I'M SORRY I COULDN'T ATTEND. I COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE YOUR MOTHER--

no.

YOU RAISE YOUR VOICE TO ME ONE MORE TIME, BOY, AND WE'LL SEE WHO WIELDS--

no!



no!!!

WHY
ARE YOU
HERE?

THOR,
YOU NEED TO
CALM DOWN
AND--

WHY?!

ANSWER ME!
YOU...YOU HAVE
MADE ME CARRY
YOUR WEIGHT, YOUR
SECRETS, YOUR
VENDETTAS, YOUR
WARS FOR MY
ENTIRE LIFE.

AND NOW
I AM DAMNED
TO CARRY THEM
AGAIN???

WHY MUST
YOU HAUNT
ME?

BECAUSE...
BECAUSE YOU
ARE KING. AND
YOU NEED--

NOW I AM KING? NOW
I NEED YOU???

NOT WHEN
THE BLACK WINTER
CAME FOR MY SOUL?
OR YOUR BROKEN
ENCHANTMENTS ALMOST
COST ME AND THIS
ENTIRE KINGDOM
OUR LIVES?

NOT WHEN THE WORLD
TREE TURNED
BLACK!

NOT WHEN
YOUR QUEEN
ASKED YOU TO
SPEAK TO HER...
TO CARE FOR HER!
FOR ANYONE BUT
YOURSELF!

NOT WHEN I PRAYED TO YOU
IN MY DARKEST HOURS WHEN
THIS CROWN FELL SO HEAVY
AROUND MY HEAD THAT I
FEARED IT MIGHT CRUSH
US ALL...

NOT
THEN...



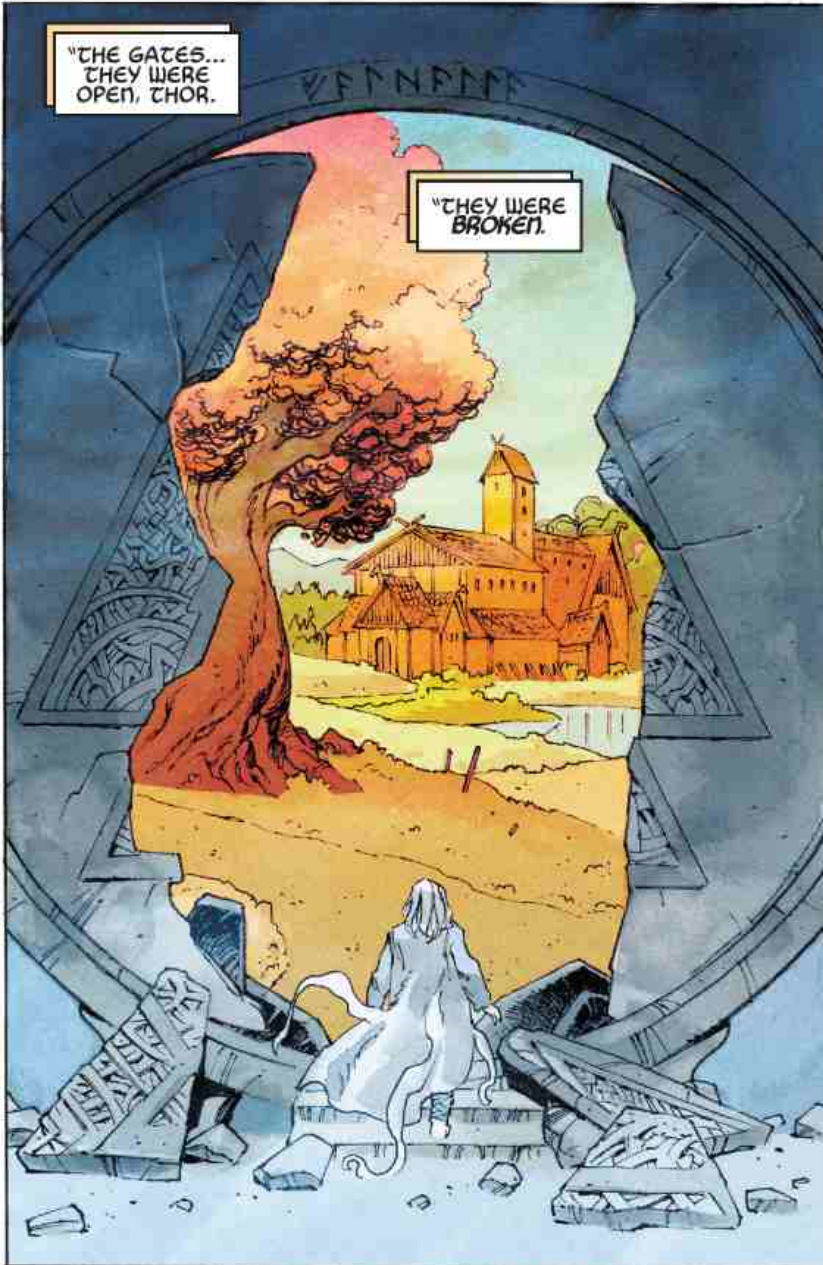
"I TRIED.

"WHEN MY SPIRIT PASSED,
I WALKED TO THE GATES
OF VALHALLA...TO FIND MY
BROTHERS, MY FATHER...



"THE GATES...
THEY WERE
OPEN, THOR.

"THEY WERE
BROKEN.



"THE GREAT HALLS...
EMPTY. NOT A SOUL
REMAINED...



"SON...I'M HERE BECAUSE I
NEED YOU. BECAUSE I HAVE
NOWHERE ELSE TO GO...

"VALHALLA...

"...IS GONE."



**NEXT:
BANNER
OF WAR!**

QUOTH THE RAVENS: THE HUGINN & MUNINN SHOW

WRITE TO US AT MHEROES@MARVEL.COM
AND MARK YOUR MISSIVES "OKAY TO PRINT."



Ah, time to read the prayers of our beloved mortals. I must say, I am grateful for this bit of normality, all things considered, but--Huginn, you look remarkably serious!

I am feeling serious today, Muninn. It is an odd feeling, I will admit, but...it seems insensitive to mess around after a king's funeral. Did you ever think we'd see--ah, why are you kicking me?!

Wallowing will not bring Odin back to physical form! We need to celebrate his life, and Thor's and Asgard's! And for that, we need some humor and the faith of the Midgardians. So let's answer some prayers and have some good fun, eh?

I don't know how I feel about you trying to be the fun one, Muninn. But sure, let's try to have some fun...as long as you leave the jokes to me.

Hey Huginn and Muninn,

Sorry to hear about Odin's sacrifice to save his son in issue #22! Hope you two are doing well. It's always sad to see a pet lose their longtime owner. Well, I guess that's what happens when you try to lock a sentient thunderstorm in a hammer for a couple millennia...

Anyway, Thor's improved battle armor looks awesome! Nic Klein knocks it out of the park again with his designs! This new look and its gold accents and eyes make Thor look a lot more like Angela. Do y'all think she would've been a more fit ruler than Thor? Her ruthlessness definitely resembles that of her father and it doesn't feel like the Black Reign of the Thunder King could get any more dire!

Andres Toro
Orlando, Florida

Pet?! I will have you know that we are not pets, Master Andres. We are valued and respected allies of Asgard. The All-Fathers do not own us--they partner with us! Remember that.

That being said, it IS sad. That much is true. And we do thank you for your kind words about Nic's art! He rendered Thor's golden armor beautifully, I must agree.

Surely on both counts, but still. Hmm...

What?

I'm trying to picture Angela as ruler of Asgard, but I think she might be a bit too...fiery. Get it, because of the hair? Ha ha.

...Know that even as I groan, I am happy you have found amusement somewhere. And I hope she does not hear you--that sword looks sharp and bad for birds.

I am so delighted with this issue. The spirits of Mangog and Mjolnir being intertwined is sheer genius. The explanation given for the why and when this came to be was believable. And then to my most unexpected surprise, Thor invokes the help of his birth mother Gaea. Also, the revelation by Odin that Thor had not received the full might of the Odin-force took me by surprise too. Only with the passing of Odin could Thor inherit it to the fullest. I do hope that business about the Phoenix being the mother of Thor is put to rest once and for all. The manifestation of the energy tornado by Thor was awesome. He hasn't done anything like that in awhile. I hope there is more to come. Thank you, Donny, Nic, Matt and the rest of the team for a magnificent story thus far.

Robert Greg Espinosa
Stockton, California

The whole ordeal was quite shocking, wasn't it? Thank you, Master Robert--we can happily assure you that there is more to come! We shall pass along your praises to Donny, Nic and Matt as well.

Heh, the events contributing to the God of Thunder's power increase were shocking, were they? I'm proud of you, Muninn--that was a good one.

...I can assure you that was completely unintentional.

Sure, sure.

Hello Huginn and Muninn,

I just wanted to give you my thoughts on issue #21. I thought it was great! The best part was when Mjolnir landed in that unknown forbidden land and re-emerged from the hammer hand first. I just thought that was a really cool way of appearing. Also, the return trip was way too fast, so I hope we see some explanation for how that happened 'cause at that speed, Mjolnir should've torn right through Odin. The statement that Mjolnir is essentially sowing its wild oats makes sense. Everyone goes through some phase or another. Sadly, not enough Hugg and Munn in this issue, so hopefully Donny includes more of my favorite Marvel pet team--the Fantastic Four Wings. Mjol-Gog is an interesting team-up. For a second there, I thought it would be Mjol-Knull. All in all, a fantastic issue and with all this talk of Pet Avengers in the letters, I just want to see Jeff the land shark join the team. Until next time, see ya. You got this. Hey, Drawn To Comics family!

Billy Goreski
Glen Dale, Arizona

Not enough of us birds is right, indeed! For all the work we have done to ensure these stories are told accurately and well...

Perhaps we ought to start asking Donny and Nic to include us more? Do remember, Huginn, that we often forget too. Not to mention just how much work we do for the kingdom and for the Pet Avengers. Sometimes it is necessary that we be away from the All-Father's immediate vicinity, and that does sometimes mean missing the action.

Hmph. Donny and Nic could still stand to include a few mentions of what we are up to, I think.

Then ask them to do so! You are not a chicken but a raven, correct?

...Maybe. I will think about how best to approach it.

Dear Mr. Cates & Mr. Klein,

I've been loving this run of THOR, it's been amazing so far, and I get sooo excited each time a new issue releases! When it was revealed Mangog fused with Mjolnir, my mind was blown. Also, has Odin merged with Mjolnir like the dwarves who made it did, and will he empower the hammer? I just want to thank both of you for all the work you put into this.

Sincerely,
Temoc Brito

P.S. Volstagg is the best!

Donny and Nic do put much work into helping us tell these stories, so I will thank you in their stead! We will happily pass your praise along to them.

And I will thank you, Muninn, for all the hard work you put into bringing these stories to life.

Ah, I appreciate that, Huginn! To address your question, Master Temoc--

Hmph.

What?, Huginn--do you want to answer that question instead?

Of course not. You did not thank me, I thanked you for your work, but you did not thank me back. We work together on these things, I hope you remember.

I am sorry, Huginn. I certainly did not intend to ruffle your feathers. And I do know all the hard work you put in--especially when Nic bribes you with treats.

Hey--that's slander!!!

Huginn and Muninn,

Thor really is being put through the wringer with this Mjolnir and Mangog (Mjolgog? Mjangleir?) team-up, huh? If only the Hulk was there to help him--too bad the real Strongest-There-Is is off-world doing who-knows-what... Ah, well, I'm sure whatever Bruce Banner is up to isn't of concern to the All-Father.

Besides, Thor seems to be getting some pretty big boosts in strength already. First the rune magic back during the War of the Realms, then inheriting Odin-force from his dear old dad, then the Power Cosmic from Galactus, now the Gaea-force and the full Odin-force? The only way I can see the Mighty Thor getting any more Mighty at this point is with the Phoenix Force--though, considering Gaea just asserted herself as his birth parent, it'd probably be bad timing for that to happen. Gaea and Odin's powers seem like more than enough to put Mjoglimannir back in their place anyhow.

Still, how about that Hulk? What a guy. Guys, I suppose, but the Big Guy and Joe don't seem to be around much these days... Sure hope Bruce is treating them all right in that mindscape of theirs. Either way, I can't help but wonder if Thor could finally be a match for him with this new power boost. What do you two think?

Jade S
Baltimore, Maryland

Ha! I suggest you turn the page, dear mortal. You will like what you see!

(What you will see is a battle between Hulk and Thor! It is coming!)

Hey! That was supposed to be a surprise!

It is not a surprise if it cannot be found. Get ready, Midgardians, for HULK VS. THOR: BANNER OF WAR ALPHA #1, on sale now! And keep sending us your missives--they are vital to Thor's success in this battle!!!

NEXT:

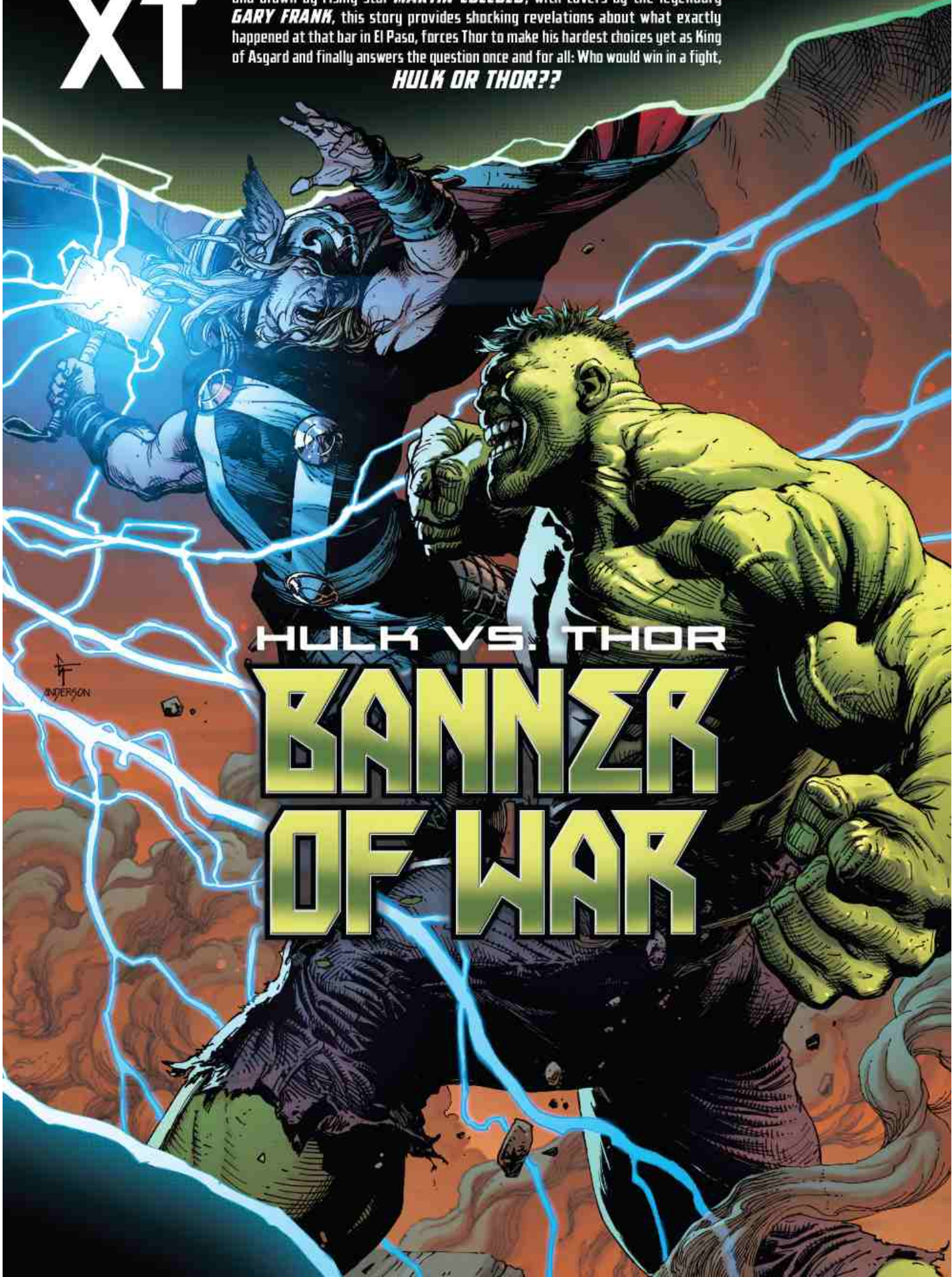
DEAD HULK VS. THOR: BANNER OF WAR ALPHA #1, ON SALE NOW. THEN COME BACK HERE NEXT MONTH FOR THOR #25, "BANNER OF WAR" PART TWO! IN ADDITION TO THAT MAIN STORY, THERE WILL ALSO BE A COUPLE OF BONUS STORIES--INCLUDING ONE BY THOR LEGENDS COM DEFALCO & BON FRENZ--AS THE CELEBRATION OF THE GOD OF THUNDER'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY CONTINUES!



NEXT

THE BRAWL TO END THEM ALL!

To celebrate the **60TH ANNIVERSARY** of both **HULK** and **THOR**, we're doing a crossover between their two series! It starts with **HULK VS. THOR: BANNER OF WAR ALPHA #1** (on sale now!) and then continues in **THOR #25**, **HULK #7** and **THOR #26** before concluding in **HULK #8**! Written by **DONNY CATES** and drawn by rising star **MARTIN COCCOLO**, with covers by the legendary **GARY FRANK**, this story provides shocking revelations about what exactly happened at that bar in El Paso, forces Thor to make his hardest choices yet as King of Asgard and finally answers the question once and for all: Who would win in a fight, **HULK OR THOR??**



HULK VS. THOR BANNER OF WAR

